

# EOP

EDUCATIONAL  
OPPORTUNITY  
PROGRAM

NEWSLETTER



Fall 2014/Winter 2015

## Testimonial from an EOP Alum

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*At right:* Antonio Bonilla receives  
the Heritage Award from President  
Donald Christian at the EOP Reunion  
in 2014.

It is difficult to put into perspective how vital a role the Educational Opportunity Program has played in my life. To this day I wonder where I would be if EOP did not exist, and the alternatives are hard to ponder. Through this program I was able to not only acquire an affordable and great education, but I was also able to grow as a man.

I met incredible people who mentored and provided me with valuable wisdom and guidance. It all started in 1982 with a special phone call from Mr. Edwin Olmo, former Assistant Director of EOP and still a close friend. He said, "Antonio, congratulations, you have been accepted to SUNY New Paltz under the Educational Opportunity Program." From that day on, an array of extraordinary people impacted my life, but most important were those individuals within the EOP family.

The commitment and passion of former EOP Director Dr. Thomas Morales gave me the framework I use as a model in my professional career. His devotion to a program that believes in young men and women from economically and academically disadvantaged



backgrounds was, and still is, what fuels me.

Many EOP Alums can agree that college was not easy, but we were lucky to have had support and guidance. My EOP Advisor Bethanne Grant DelGaudio helped me navigate the treacherous waters of college. She was able to challenge me academically, assist me with financial aid, my personal life, and above all: my career.

I feel obligated to give back to a program that gave me so much more than what I expected straight out of high school. I have gained so much from EOP that this is an obligation I happily repay every

day and in all the ways I can afford: my time, my passion, and my lifelong commitment to the young people we serve.

Alums, yes we do have an obligation to EOP! Step up with me to make the difference: *Once EOP... Always EOP!*

*Thank you!*

Antonio Bonilla  
Director of EOP



## MVP: Building Leaders

EOP is happy to unveil a new program dedicated to developing leadership skills, teaching professionalism, and encouraging positive campus and community engagement. **Men Valuing Professionalism** or **MVP** has been designed to address the needs of our EOP male students and positively reinforces the desire for young men to pursue leadership positions on campus, while building the skills required to effectively do so.

In recent years, the number of male students within EOP at New Paltz gaining on-campus leadership positions has declined. Our young men are not pursuing these positions at the same rate as their female counterparts. MVP works to identify the types of skills which would help our members be competitive in an interview process and to establish a positive lasting reputation.

MVP develops leadership, communication, collaboration, and management/organizational skills, as well as, ethical and moral decision making amongst its members by carefully selecting initiatives/workshops, guest speakers, community service activities, and other relevant events which meet the vision, mission, and goals of the program.



### Examples include

- A leadership qualities initiative by the Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. David L. Rooney
- Initiative on budgeting and personal finance by Alumni Pascal Guirma
- Event planning workshop by Brendan O'Brien
- A comparison initiative of good vs. not so good public leaders by Aaron Hines
- Attendance at various Career Resource Center Workshop Wednesdays career development workshops
- Participants in New Paltz Clean Sweep day
- Volunteered for the Graduate School Open House & Accepted Students Days
- Attend EOP initiatives
- Attended a dining etiquette event through the School of Business
- Professional Attire workshops
- Participate in internal team building exercises



Top to bottom: MVP Dining Etiquette Event; New Paltz Clean Up 2013

The MVP Executive Board members meet individually with one of the four current program advisors for support and guidance in their roles as officers for the program and the advisors are available for personal guidance for all voting and aspiring MVP members. As MVP members become more engaged in campus and community activities they expand their network and professional support system. The program maintains its design and organization through the adherence to its constitution which was modeled after the M.A.L.E.S. program at Eastern Connecticut State University. In late fall 2012 the constitution was modified to meet the needs of our students and to fit with the structure of EOP and SUNY New Paltz, thus through extensive research and collaboration between EOP and then current students MVP was established. If you would like any further information about the program please call **Robert Hancock** at 845-257-3226.



Top to bottom: Team Building; MVP Induction Ceremony 2013





### Vision Statement

**Men Valuing Professionalism (M.V.P.) offers all EOP male students purposeful community engagement, and a cohesive, supportive network founded on topics relevant to male student development, including leadership, civic engagement, and active citizenship in higher education and beyond.**

### Mission Statement

Through continual improvement and assessment, the program connects males from diverse backgrounds to one another and the campus community, advancing individual self-efficacy, self-awareness, and collective broadening of perspective via civil, productive, and positive program initiatives.

### Goals include

- Consistent communication amongst members, and involvement in decision-making with EOP Staff who provide guidance and feedback throughout the semester.
- Fostering connections amongst students, and between students, the university, and campus community.
- Making informed decisions in challenging academic, social, and personal circumstances.
- Defining personal values, short and long-term goals, and standards of conduct congruent with campus rules and regulations.



### Membership Highlights

This program is currently open to EOP male students at SUNY New Paltz. Any of these students can attend MVP events, however if they want to become official voting members they must complete and maintain specific requirements as follows:

- Students seeking membership must attend two or more MVP Program initiatives, complete at least two hours of community service, and must present a written statement of commitment to the mission of MVP.
- Members must maintain involvement in meetings and events. The constitution outlines a strict attendance policy.
- They must conduct themselves in an honorable fashion. If there is documented evidence to the contrary their membership will be revoked.
- If a student loses membership and wants to regain their place in the program, they must follow specific steps and all active members will vote on the reinstatement of membership.

### Current Executive Officers & Positions: Spring 2014

President ..... *Joel Almanzar*  
Vice President..... *Akeem Samuels*  
Finance Chair..... *Jesus Silvestre*  
Secretary..... *Andrew Caceres*  
Public Relations  
Media Manager ..... *Roniel Urena*  
Community Service  
Coordinator ..... *Thierno Balde*  
Sergeant of Arms..... *Jeffrey Noboa*  
Historian..... *Dany Ramdhanie*

### Advisors

EOP Director ..... *Antonio Bonilla*  
EOP Advisor..... *Robert Hancock*  
Graduate Administrative  
Assistant..... *Carlos Aponte*  
Events Coordinator .... *Brendan O'Brian*



Left page: Financial Planning workshop with Pascal  
This page: MVP E-board 2013; Volunteer Work  
Spring 2013



## Thanks & Congratulations to Our Outgoing XAE E-board

We asked these three questions to our outgoing E-boarders:

What was your **favorite part** of being on the XAE E-board?

What was your **greatest accomplishment** or an accomplishment that you are most proud of?

What **impact** has being a part of XAE leadership had on you?

*Here is what they said...*

### Bermery Maria

Year: Senior

Hometown: Bronx, NY

Major: Childhood Education & Spanish

#### favorite

My favorite part of being on the XAE E-board is sharing many laughs and memories with the other E-board members as well as the EOP family in general.

#### greatest

My greatest accomplishment has been making it to college and soon it will be graduating from SUNY New Paltz.

#### impact

Being on XAE means giving back not only to the campus community but to those who are in need. XAE puts together many great community service projects and as an E-board, we try to make sure the members of the Honor Society have the opportunity to give back as well.

### Sandra Arellano

Year: Senior (wohoo) :)

Hometown: Queens, NY

Major: Sociology with a concentration in Criminology

#### favorite

Every person that makes up the E-board. I really love the environment and dynamic that we all have. We work together as one and we make things happen. It has been a pleasure to work closely with lve and my E-board for the past two years. :)

#### greatest

This four years have been some of the greatest years of my life. Being an RA, Peer Mentor and XAE E-board member has helped me build amazing relationships with people. After four years, I could say that I did not only excel academically but I have met so many great people that have helped me be the person that I am now.

#### impact

I am proud to be an EOP student and I believe that it is a privilege to be an XAE member. Getting inducted was a way for me to show that EOP did not make a mistake by choosing me to be a part of their program and becoming an XAE member was a way for me to give back to my EOP family. The E-board has worked very hard this last couple of years and so we hope that future honorable members take this opportunity to get involved and make the best out of the E-board.

### Máliqua Fisher

Year: Senior

Hometown: North Babylon, LONG ISLAND!

Major: Sociology with a concentration in Criminology

#### favorite

My favorite part of being on the XAE E-board is being a part of an amazing, determined set of women who overall want to be successful in every way possible.

#### greatest

Being the first African American at SUNY New Paltz to win the Heinz Ahlmeyer award. Dedication, perseverance and service beyond self has been an inspiration to both my teammates and fellow students.

#### impact

To be an XAE member and on the E-board means everything to me because not only are we recognized for being in an honor society, but we promote academic excellence in others. It is an honor to assist people in our community who are in need of help. XAE helps me to realize that I can do whatever I put my mind to and be a role model to any and everyone.

### Melly Y. Maldonado V.

Year: Junior

Hometown: Sto. Dgo., DR (Bronx)

Major: Psychology with a minor in Spanish

#### favorite

Being part of the E-board is a sign that I am on the right path towards accomplishing my goals. Which is being able to be more social and be a leader. Also it keeps reminding me how far I have gone and my greatest accomplishment.

#### greatest

I came to this country six years ago with no english and now here I am; I made it through high school and now I am going to be a senior in college, to then go on to do my masters.

#### impact

One of my favorite part of belonging to the E-board is that I am building friendships that otherwise I would not be able to and most importantly we get to do activities such as community services. When you do something for one person and the only thing that person can give you is her/his gratitude and smile, it is so rewarding and in your heart you know you have done something good.

### Tania Pastuizaca

Year: Junior

Hometown: Queens, NY

Major: Sociology with a concentration in Human Services

#### favorite

My favorite part about being a part of the XAE E-board is being able to work with amazing unique individuals as a team. We come together to work on goals and expectations that we have for our honor society.

#### greatest

One of my greatest accomplishments is graduating on time. I have set a goal to finish in four years and for a while I got set off track but I worked hard to make sure I got back on track to accomplish my personal goal. The fact that I will be a senior next year is another accomplishment that I am very proud of because it means I am very close to being a college graduate with a bachelors degree.

#### impact

It is an honor to be a part of XAE. I am a member because of my hard work and dedication to my studies. Being a part of XAE means being a part of an organization with other students who share a common appreciation and dedication for success in our educational career. Being a part of the E-board means being a part of a team of leaders who help run our chapter.

### Arisa James

Year: Senior

Hometown: Brooklyn, NY

Major: Communication Disorders

#### favorite

My favorite part of XAE is surprisingly our 8 am eboard meetings. These ladies have great positive attitudes and starting my mornings with them gives me a good head start in my day.

#### greatest

My proudest accomplishment was putting a cultural fair together because I learned about others traditions while helping those in foreign countries.

## 2015–2016 XAE E-board Members



Left to right: Raquel Kissi, Betsy Wiener, Devorah Price, Indira Larancuent, Tania Pastuizaca, Ashley Frazier, Marfry Hernandez, Ja'Lisha Higgs

#### impact

Being a part of XAE means that I continue to honor the legacy and values that EOP has instilled in their students. As an eboard member have to constantly maintain a level of expectations not only for XAE but for myself.

### Kaycia Sailsman

Year: Junior

Hometown: Brooklyn, NY

Major: Journalism

#### favorite

My favorite part of being on the E-board is how comfortable everyone is with each other. I also like how everyone is always helping each other out as well, whether it is XAE related or not.

#### greatest

My greatest/most proud accomplishment is being inducted into Chi Alpha Epsilon National Honor Society.

#### impact

To me being an XAE member means giving back to the community and working together to help each other reach their goals. To be on the E-board, this means working cohesively with my fellow members in order to uphold the legacy of Chi Alpha Epsilon.



# Reunion Weekend Fall 2014





## EOP Goes Abroad! Award Winners & Travelers

### Fall 2014 Awards & Winners

#### Boren

Valentina Mogollon—Senegal

#### EOP Grant

Sharlyn Galarza—Kingston, UK  
Samantha Lee—Nagasaki, Japan  
Melly Maldonado—South Korea

#### Gillman

Jonathan Cantres—Kingston, UK  
Ediliana Estrella —Japan  
Samantha Lee—Nagasaki, Japan  
Arlenys Valdez—Japan

#### Global Scholars

Sharlyn Galarza—Kingston, UK  
Jonathan Cantres—Kingston, UK  
Kaycia Sailsman—Cardiff, Wales  
Edyaline Tejeda—Kingston, UK  
Alexsa Tolentino—Kingston, UK



Ja'Lisha Higgs in WALES



Case Kelly, EOP Study Abroad Advisor



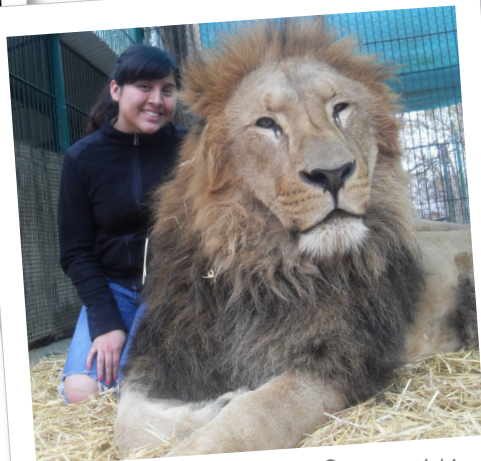
Loretta Young in THAILAND



Ashley Sanchez in ECUADOR



Youseff Kouyo in KOREA



Veracruz De Leon in ARGENTINA

## Proud Past, Bold Future: First World Reunion 2015



### SAVE THE DATE

The SUNY New Paltz First World Reunion on May 1–3, 2015, will bring together alumni, students, professors and administrators to celebrate the rich heritage, culture and growing diversity at the college. This year's reunion theme, "Proud Past, Bold Future," embodies the significant accomplishments of our alumni of color and our pioneers past and present.

#### Reunion weekend will feature:

- A new Dr. Margaret Wade-Lewis 5K Walk/Run
- Alumni and student led panel discussions
- Alumni basketball game
- A campus BBQ
- A Voices of Unity Concert
- A special tribute to our alumni/faculty trailblazers
- A Gospel Brunch on Sunday

The First World Reunion is an extension of the annual First World Graduation ceremony, which celebrates the accomplishments of SUNY New Paltz's students of color during commencement activities.



For more information or to volunteer:  
email us: [newpaltzfirstworldreunion15@gmail.com](mailto:newpaltzfirstworldreunion15@gmail.com)

like us: [newpaltzfirstworld.reunion](http://newpaltzfirstworld.reunion)

First World Commencement Ceremony 2014





Left to right: Siuyim Auyeung, Jessica Purcell, Christine N. Featherston, Antonio Bonilla, Clare Kelly-Barra, Ivelisse Tuttle, Robert Hancock, Courtney McDermott

## *Once EOP, Always EOP*

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